

REMARKS

The Examiner objected to the numbering of claims. In response Applicants have renumbered the first instance of claim 12 to claim 11.

The Examiner objected to claim 1, lines 8 and 9 requesting: “shmoo testing by incrementing or decrementing or decrementing and decrementing values” be changed to “---shmoo testing said memory array by incrementing and decrementing values---.” Applicants respectfully point out that claim 1 does not recite “decrementing and decrementing values” but rather recites “incrementing and decrementing values.” Further, it is Applicants intention to claim three alternative methods of changing the values namely increasing the value , decreasing the value or both increasing and decreasing the value.” Applicants have amended claims 1 and 10 to more clearly indicate the fact that there are three alternatives.

The Examiner objected to the indentation of claims 1, 6, 10 and 14. Applicants respectfully point out that this Application was filed electronically using an early version of the PTO software, which removed all the indentations of the specification and claims. Claims 1, 6, 10 and 14 as listed in the “In The Claims” section *supra* have the original and proper indentation.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. 112 (2nd paragraph).

The Examiner rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Anand et al. (United States Patent 6,768,694) in view of Thatcher et al. (United States Patent 6,795,788).

Applicants respectfully traverse the §112 and §103 rejections with the following arguments.

35 USC § 112 Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 10 under 35 U.S.C §112, (second) paragraph stating “claims 1 and 10 recites the limitation ‘schmoo testing and minimum or maximum value of said test parameter’” is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not reasonably appraise the scope of the invention. The examiner would appreciate if the applicant would clarify this matter.”

Applicants respectfully point that claims 1 and 10 do not have a claim element “schmoo testing and minimum or maximum value of said test parameter.” Further, Applicants are unsure as to what “a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree” applies to. Thus because of both these points, Applicants cannot fully respond and request the Examiner clarify.

However, Applicants, in order to move case toward allowance, assume that the Examiner is referring to the elements “minimum value of said test parameter” and “maximum value of said test parameter.” Based on this assumption, Applicants respectfully disagree that the terms minimum value of said test parameter” and “maximum value of said test parameter” are not defined in Applicants specification. Applicants refer the Examiner to Applicants paragraphs [0020], [0024], [0035], [0040], [0043], and FIG. 7A which provide several examples of values for test parameters as for examples “a minimum operating voltage” “the maximum and minimum values are predetermined for the parameter being shmooed” and “first and second schmoo limits.” Therefore, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 10 to indicate the values are “predetermined.” Applicants believe this amendment overcomes the Examiners 35 U.S.C §112, (second) paragraph rejection of claims 1 and 10.

The Examiner rejected claims 2 and 12 under 35 U.S.C §112, (second) paragraph stating “claims 2 and 11 recite the limitation first number of fuses plus said second number of fuses equal to said total number of fuses or said first number of fuses plus said second number of fuses equal said total number of fuses minus a predetermined number of fuses is in comprehensive (having subject to no limit). Further, this limitation is not clear how the first and second number of fuses compared with the total number of fuses minus a predetermined number of fuses. This limitation must be rewritten to clearly claim what the Applicant intends. The examiner would appreciate if the applicant would clarify this matter.”

Applicants point out, that Applicants FIGs. 1 and 2 clearly show the number of fuses is not unlimited, they must fit on the integrated circuit chip and that paragraphs [0016] and [0017] give examples of how many fuses are contained in a chip, to wit “Generally there is one fuse 120/155 for each redundant wordline 110/145.” Additionally, the number of fuses is limited in the preambles of claims 1 and 10, to wit “an integrated circuit having a total number of fuses *for effecting repair of said integrated circuit.*”

Further Applicants believe that the amendments of claims 2 and 11 clearly indicate that there are two alternative relationships between the number of fuses on the chip and the first and second number of fuses and overcome the Examiners 35 U.S.C §112, (second) paragraph rejection of claims 2 and 11.

35 USC § 103 Rejections

Applicant contends that Anand et al. cannot be used as prior art in rejecting claims of the present patent application, because “[e]ffective November 29, 1999, subject matter which was prior art under former 35 U.S.C. 103 via 35 U.S.C. 102(e) is now disqualified as prior art against the claimed invention if that subject matter and the claimed invention ‘were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to assignment by the same person.’” MPEP 706.02(1)(1). First, the present patent application was filed on February 25, 2004 which is after November 29, 1999. Second, the Anand et al. patent is being considered by the Examiner as prior art under former 35 U.S.C. 103 via 35 U.S.C. 102(e), because the Anand et al. patent issued on July 27, 2004 which is after the filing date of February 25, 2004 of the present patent application. Third, both the subject matter of Anand et al. patent and the claimed invention of the present patent application were, at the time the invention was made, owned by International Business Machines Corporation or subject to assignment by International Business Machines Corporation. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully maintains that Anand et al. cannot be used as a prior art reference.

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicants respectfully maintain that claims 1-26 are not unpatentable in view of Anand et al. in view of Thatcher et al and are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicants respectfully believe that all pending claims and the entire application meet the acceptance criteria for allowance and therefore request favorable action. If Examiner believes that anything further would be helpful to place the application in better condition for allowance, Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below. The Director is hereby authorized to charge and/or credit Deposit Account 09-0456.

Respectfully submitted,
FOR: Combs et al.

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